

Greater St. Louis Federal Executive Board

Gateway COOP Working Group Minutes December 8, 2005 (Prepared January 3, 2006)

Ruth M. Cheshier, DHS-FEMA, was the guest speaker for the December meeting. She described "Operation Show Me Care," the hurricane Katrina evacuee shelter which FEMA, the City of St. Louis, the State of Missouri Department of Natural Resources, the National Guard, and numerous private businesses and non profit groups set up in September 2005 in a vacant Boeing building adjacent to the St Louis Lambert International Airport. A brief summary of the presentation follows.

In September, the City of St. Louis and Missouri Governor Blunt volunteered to shelter 2000 evacuees from Hurricane Katrina. The two level shelter was set up in 38,000 square feet of a vacant Boeing building in one week. The building had an attached hangar where medical evacuees could be brought in by plane. A big welcome sign was attached to the building, "Welcome St. Louis." Medical personnel were available for triage and then evacuees could be taken to a hospital if needed. There were 20 Red Cross Stations set up for evacuee self assessment of needs with IBM bar coded wristlets for children and lanyard cards for adults. It was planned that 300 people could be evaluated in 1.5 hours. Personal care items, Goodwill clothes, books and toys, were available.

The National Guard set up 80 showers. Three dormitories were set up: one for females only, one for males and one for families. Former executives' offices were used as private rooms for families. There even was a movie room set up for the children in a former Boeing theater. The lounges were furnished with donated, brand new furniture and with a big screen TV. A 3000 square foot day care was set up.

The National Incident Management System using Incident Command System principles was used in setting up the shelter. Security was planned with two person patrols. People were available to answer questions. Photo IDs with a color-coded access system was used to identify volunteers and where they could be in the facility. Over 900 volunteers were slated to help.

The intent was for evacuees to spend 1-2 days at the shelter and then move on. Hotel rooms were available after the initial assessment. Medical care, employers ready to hire evacuees, and social services were all planned to be available to aid the evacuees.

Not one evacuee used the facility.

This is a model plan that should be used in the future. Ms. Cheshier's Power Point presentation and the shelter plan will be posted on the St. Louis Federal Executive Board's website at [www.stlouis.feb.gov](http://www.stlouis.feb.gov).

The next meeting is scheduled for January 12, 2006, 1-3 pm at the Federal Center.